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ABSTRACT

This report of a survey of eight states which implemented the School to Work Opportunities Act (STWOA) provides information on provisions in the state plans, the extent to which special educators participate in planning and implementation efforts, and how the needs of students with disabilities have been addressed. An overview is provided of the STWOA, including components of a school-to-work program and activities for local partnerships. Challenges that the law places on educational systems in general and special education in particular are considered, along with recommendations to help special educators use STWOA programs to benefit students with disabilities. Charts provide survey results and allow comparison across states. Brief state profiles are presented for Illinois, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Maine, Michigan, New Jersey, Oregon, and Wisconsin. It was found that most responding states had undertaken the 18 key activities required or recommended in the STWOA state plans. Special education personnel were less often involved in activities not associated directly with education (e.g., promotion of business involvement), but are involved in activities that have direct service ramifications. The needs of students with disabilities are more likely to receive specific attention when special education personnel are involved in a particular activity. The survey form is appended, along with results of school-to-work inquiry by category and state. (SW)

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THE SCHOOL TO WORK OPPORTUNITIES ACT: AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED STATES' INITIAL EFFORTS

by
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and
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FOREWORD

This report is the result of a study done under Project FORUM, a contract funded by the Office of Special Education Programs of the U.S. Department of Education and located at the National Association of State Directors of Special Education (NASDSE). Project FORUM carries out a variety of activities that provide information needed for program improvement, and promote the utilization of research data and other information for improving outcomes for students with disabilities. The project also provides technical assistance and information on emerging issues, and convenes small work groups to gather expert input, obtain feedback, and develop conceptual frameworks related to critical topics in special education.

The purpose of this analysis is to examine eight states' initial responses to the School to Work Opportunity Act. The examination focused on major provisions in the state plan, the extent to which special educators participate in planning and implementation efforts, and how the needs of students with disabilities were addressed. The information provided by responding States represents a *snap shot in time* of where the states were in their efforts to respond to and benefit from the STWOA. Federal funds ware awarded in 1994, therefore, the specific information reported and its implications should be viewed as very preliminary and tentative. Moreover, since STWOA activities are ongoing and evolving, the information and the implications derived from the inquiry will be dated quickly. NASDSE believes, however, that the inquiry form itself might serve as (1) a benchmark tool for judging within State efforts over time (2) a simple tool by which to capture the extent to which and how all States are approaching STWOA-related opportunities, and (3) finally, an indicator of the extent to which special education personnel are engaged in the design of STWOA programs and the extent to which the needs of students with disabilities are specifically addressed in the design and implementation of such programs.

ABSTRACT

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act, P.L. 103-239, was enacted on May 4, 1994, authorizing funds for states to develop statewide school-to-work programs. These programs must help students select careers; integrate school-based learning and work-based learning; must provide instruction in general workplace competencies such as positive work attitudes, employability skills and participatory skills, and broad instruction, to the extent practicable, in all aspects of an industry; and optionally, offer paid work experience, job shadowing, mentoring of students by employers, school-sponsored enterprises, and on-the-job training for credit. In order to receive State Implementation Grants, states must specify how eleven state entities will work together to achieve the goals of the law. Moreover, in creating state and local partnerships to implement a State Plan, both public and private organizations are identified in partnership membership categories. Finally, it is specified that multiple federal programs will be coordinated with School-to-Work Opportunities Act-related efforts.

Recognizing that the STWOA was on a fast track and that action would shift quickly to the states, Project FORUM at NASDSE examined nine states' initial responses to the STWOA. The examination focused on major provisions in the state plan, the extent to which special educators participate in planning and implementation efforts, and how the needs of students with disabilities were addressed. The results of this examination are reported in this paper. The inquiry form can be found in Appendix A.

Specifically, this paper provides an overview of the STWOA, including major components of a school-to-work program and allowable activities for local partnerships. The paper also discusses some challenges the law places on educational systems in general and on special education in specific, summarizes the results of the NASDSE STWOA inquiry, proffers implications, and finally, proposes recommendations to help special educators engage and shape STWOA programs so that students with disabilities benefit.

Nine states, eight of which have STWOA Implementation Grants, were asked to complete an 18-factor inquiry form. The 18 factors reflected the 18 major requirements specified for inclusion in the STWOA State Implementation Grants. Four basic questions were asked regarding each factor. They are as follows:

- Was a factor (activity) addressed in a state's STWOA effort?
- Did the effort involve special education personnel?
- Were the needs of students with disabilities specifically addressed in the effort?
- What examples or documentation are available?

The results indicate that most responding states have undertaken the 18 key activities required or recommended in the STWOA State plans. Specifically, all eight states addressed

eleven of the eighteen factors. Fifteen factors were addressed by six or more states.

Although a very limited sample, two implications standout. First, special education personnel are less often involved in "big picture" activities not associated with "education," but are involved in activities that have direct service ramifications. Second, if special education personnel are involved in a particular activity, then needs of students with disabilities are more likely to receive specific attention.

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THE SCHOOL TO WORK OPPORTUNITIES ACT: AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED STATES' INITIAL EFFORTS

BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

Recent Legislation

In the 103rd Congress, significant and fundamental changes to the educational system were triggered by two acts -- **Goals 2000: Educate America Act** and **the School-to-Work Opportunities Act (STWOA).** These two laws will alter what is offered to students, what is expected of students, and what will become of students when they exit our educational system. An unknown in this pending new educational enterprise is whether it will expand or shrink opportunities for students with disabilities. Since we are at the "starting gate" it is imperative that special educators take an active, direct, and focused role in ensuring that opportunities for students with disabilities, both in and out of school, are expanded, appropriate, and not made more separate from those of their peers.

Goals 2000: Educate America Act, enacted March 31, 1994 (P.L. 103-227), has as its core purpose the reform of American education. The specific purposes of the statute are to: promote coherent, nationwide, systematic education reform; improve the quality of learning in the classroom and workplace; define appropriate federal, state, and local roles and responsibilities for school reform and lifelong learning; establish valid and reliable mechanisms for building a broad consensus on national education reform; assist in the development and certification of high quality, internationally competitive content and student performance standards, opportunity-to-learn standards, and assessment measures; support new initiatives to provide equal opportunity for all students to meet high academic and occupational skill standards and to succeed in the world of employment and civic participation; and stimulate the development and adoption of a voluntary national system of occupational skill standards and certification to serve as a cornerstone of the national strategy to enhance work force skills. Eventually, the law will not only direct what is learned in school, determine how student performance will be evaluated, and if states and local school districts receive federal funds, but also affect if and under what conditions individuals are judged qualified for specific occupations. It is clear that this law will serve as a catalyst for new levels of accountability within the educational system, and for increased specificity and uniformity during instruction and student assessment.

The School-to-Work Opportunities Act, P.L. 103-239, the focus of this paper, was enacted on May 4, 1994, authorizing funds for states to develop statewide school-to-work programs. These programs must assist students select careers; integrate school-based learning and work-based learning; must provide instruction in general workplace competencies such as positive work attitudes, employability skills and participatory skills, and broad instruction, to the extent practicable, in all aspects of an industry; and optionally, offer paid work experience, job shadowing, mentoring of students by employers, school-sponsored enterprises, and on-the-job training for credit. In order to receive State Implementation

Grants, states must specify how eleven state entities will work together to achieve the goals of the law. Moreover, in creating state and local partnerships to implement a State Plan, both public and private organizations are identified in partnership membership categories. Finally, it is specified that multiple federal programs will be coordinated with School-to-Work Opportunities Act-related efforts.

Recognizing the substantial impact that STWOA will have on students with disabilities, the U.S. Department of Education announced on December 2, 1994, its proposed intent to fund a major technical assistance agreement to assist states and local communities facilitate effective transitions for students with disabilities from school to postsecondary education and the world of work.

Implications of Recent Legislation for Students with Disabilities

What these two laws mean in terms of opportunities for students with disabilities is unclear; however, three observations can be made with regard to the implications for special educators. First, no rights are specified and no set asides are guaranteed for individuals with disabilities; such individuals are to be included and treated as other eligible recipients, and have as much right to participate as others. To remain viable, this may require an increased willingness on the part of special educators to work in collaboration with others in a greater number of settings, as well as to offer intense remedial or preparatory assistance in specific situations. It also may mean that special educators may need to learn how to market their services in new ways, for example in the form of technical assistance or advice to others.

Second, considerable energy is being invested in developing world-class educational and occupational skill standards. These standards will eventually function as guide posts and gate keepers; guide posts for shaping the services an individual will receive and for judging an individual's progress, and gate keepers for defining who is qualified and thus eligible for additional opportunities. These standards must not become the basis upon which opportunities for students with disabilities are lessened or consistently channeled separately from those offered to other students.

Third, more and better quality employment-related opportunities will emerge for students with disabilities to the extent that special educators take part in developing new standards, using them as guide posts to assist students with disabilities prepare for employment and careers, and also contribute to the standards being applied fairly to such students by others. A central component of success in such efforts will be the ability to contribute credible, validated approaches to assessing the readiness of a student with a disability to perform specific functions associated with career paths and specific jobs.

School-to-Work Opportunities Act: Impetus for the Legislation

Special educators and advocates have recognized the importance of a smooth transition for students with disabilities from school to the world of work for a long time and assisted with the enactment of the systems change grants in transition in the 1988 amendments to Education of the Handicapped Act (now IDEA). The STWOA is the broader community response to provide a smooth transition for all students.

Multiple facts converged leading to the enactment of the STWOA. High schools emphasize academics and are not organized to connect educational opportunities directly to careers. Technology is revolutionizing the workplace. Thus, even entry level positions often require knowledge of how to use technology. The number of available unskilled positions is shrinking at a rapid rate. Although 50 percent of high school students indicate plans to attend four-year institutions, only 25 percent actually graduate from such institutions. Wages of unskilled workers are significantly below and stay below workers with specific skill training and education. Federally-supported programs that provide education and training, although numerous, are not coordinated and thus inadvertently deny opportunities to some students, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Through Congressional testimony, often with compelling statistics, education and business leaders made the case for revamping high school education and clearly connecting what happens in school to what is needed in the world of work. What was missing in this dialogue was information about our experience with the state transition projects for students with disabilities and only minimal attention to students with disabilities themselves. The phrase "all students should have an opportunity to participate in school-to-work programs," was viewed as a sufficient directive for promoting a policy of inclusion for any population of students. This phrasing is reflected throughout the STWOA.

Purpose of the Document

Recognizing that the STWOA was on a fast track and that action would shift quickly to the states, OSEP, through Project FORUM at NASDSE, decided to examine nine states' initial responses to the STWOA. The examination focused on major provisions in the state plan, the extent to which special educators participate in planning and implementation efforts, and how the needs of students with disabilities were addressed. The results of this examination are reported in this paper. The inquiry form can be found in Appendix A.

Specifically, this paper provides an overview of the STWOA, including major components of a school-to-work program and allowable activities for local partnerships. The paper also discusses some challenges the law places on educational systems in general and on special education in specific, summarizes the results of the NASDSE STWOA inquiry, proffers implications, and finally, proposes recommendations to help special educators engage and shape STWOA program so that students with disabilities benefit.

SCHOOL-TO-WORK OPPORTUNITIES ACT: AN OVERVIEW

Major Components of a School-to-Work Program

The three major components of the school-to-work title (Title I) of STWOA are the school-based learning component, the work-based learning component, and the connecting activities component. A discussion of each component, the primary features of the component, and their implications are discussed in this section of the paper.

The School-Based Learning Component

School-based learning components of a school-to-program must have these features:

- *Career awareness and exploration and counseling* - These services are to begin no later than the seventh grade. The services are to help interested students "identify, select, or reconsider their interests, goals, and career majors, including options that may not be traditional for their gender, race, or ethnicity" (section 102 (1)).

- *Career major selection* - Interested students should select a career major no later than the beginning of the eleventh grade.

- *Standards-driven curricula* - The program of study must be designed to meet the academic content a state has established for all students. These standards should be those established under Goals 2000 (at this time math standards only have been adopted) and those occupational skill standards that will permit a student to pursue postsecondary education or to earn a skills certificate.

- *Integration of academic and vocational learning* - The integration should incorporate into instruction all aspects of an industry tied to a student's career major.

- *Regularly scheduled evaluations involving ongoing consultation and problem solving* - The program must provide these services to students and school dropouts. The purpose of these activities is to assist individuals identify their strengths and weaknesses, academic progress, workplace knowledge, goals, and the need for additional learning opportunities.

- *Facilitation of transition* - Programs must be designed to facilitate the transition of a student from a school-to-work program to additional training, postsecondary education, or between education and training programs.

The features of the school-based learning component will affect opportunities for students with disabilities--some uncertain or negative and some positive. For example, the phrase "interested students" referenced in Section 102(1) as those students for whom career awareness, exploration, and counseling will be targeted, could place an obligation on elementary teachers to motivate and encourage students to recognize and channel their interests and talents early. As this obligation increasingly affects the selection of elementary school curricula, arrangement of exposures to the world of work experiences, and general placement procedures, students with disabilities could be inadvertently excluded from opportunities to select and express their interests and talents to the same extent as their non disabled peers. Further, if career exploration is introduced as a central focus of elementary school, educators who prepare students to make career path selections in the eleventh grade may be giving their students an advantage. If there is collaboration among general and special educators in shaping this preparation process, then the resulting approach could be sufficiently flexible to offer benefits to students with a diverse range of abilities, including many students with disabilities.

The use of standards raises concerns as well. If standards are adopted for all high school exit options and if the standards are narrowly conceived, students with disabilities who cannot demonstrate competency in standards may be left with an uncertain academic future and/or an undefined career path. In spite of these uncertain or negative possibilities, students with disabilities might prosper in school-to-work initiatives if general educators embrace the use of the Individualized Transition Plan as a model for planning and serving all students. In addition, the obligation imposed by STWOA on educators to "facilitate transition," offers students with disabilities access to more direct assistance and support from general educators in securing post-school opportunities than may have been the case in the past.

Work-Based Learning Component

This component specifies five mandatory requirements for the school-to-work program and one optional feature. They are as follows:

- *Work experience* - The law neither defines or gives examples of the term "work experience."

- *Planned program of job training and work experience* - These activities are to include training in both pre-employment and employment skills, mastered at progressively higher levels, coordinated with school-based learning, relevant to career majors, and lead to a skills certificate.

- *Workplace mentoring* - In the definitions section of the law a workplace mentor is

defined as an individual who is "an employee or other individual, approved by the employer at a workplace, who possess the skills and knowledge to be mastered by the student, and who instructs the student, critiques the performance of the student, challenges the student to perform well, and works in consultation with classroom teachers and the employer" (sec. 4(25)).

- *Instruction in workplace competencies* - These activities must include instruction and activities related to developing positive attitudes about work, generic employability skills, and the ability to "participate" in a work setting.

- *Broad instruction in all aspects of an industry* - In the definitions section of the law the term "all aspects of an industry" means "all aspects of an industry or industry sector a student is preparing to enter, including planning, management, finances, technical and production skills, underlying principles of technology, labor and community issues, heath and safety issues, and environmental issues, related to such industry or industry sector" (sec. 4(1)).

- *Optional feature* - This component may include paid work experience, job shadowing, school-sponsored enterprises, and on-the-job training.

This component creates multiple pressures to revamp what happens in high schools. First, outside of vocational education or special projects (e.g., programs sponsored with/by business for high risk students), current faculty have not been expected to connect what they teach to "all aspects of an industry." Moreover, high school faculty have not been expected to interconnect their instruction across grades or classes in ways that tie instruction to career paths. Currently most activities that engage students in general and specific experiences related to work and career paths are found in vocational education. Outside of vocational education, work or work experiences, are a student's personal choice, in which a school typically has little or no involvement.

The obligation to provide instruction in broad instruction in all aspects of an industry may place demands on both faculty and students that will be difficult to implement, especially in the short term. Special education, because of investment in transition programs and collaboration with vocational rehabilitation, may offer a broader range of work-related experiences during high school years than are available to students generally. Experiences with supported employment projects provide models of how to implement workplace mentoring. The work-based learning component offers exciting opportunities for special educators. Those who have experiences in coordinating across subjects, creating a relevance between instruction and jobs, have expertise in job design, job analysis, and especially job development, have skills that are critically needed by schools. By helping create the school-to-work program for all students, special educators may be able to ensure diverse options and equitable treatment for students with disabilities.

Connecting Activities Component

The STWOA recognized clearly that the successes of school-to-work programs depend greatly on linkages, thus the requirement for connecting activities. Eight mandatory connecting activities are identified. They are as follows:

- *Matching students with work-based learning opportunities of employers* - The state grant announcement contained no elaboration on this point. Nonetheless, if employers are involved in designing school-to-work programs, opportunities to do unpaid work, job shadowing and to access mentors would constitute examples of possible "matching" activities. The creation of job banks and labor market data banks are other examples of how matching might be facilitated.

- *Providing a school site mentor* - Each student should have a school site mentor to act as a liaison with the student and the employer, school, teacher, school administrator, and the parent of the student, and to the extent appropriate, other community partners in the school-to-work program.

- *Providing technical assistance* - The school-to-work program must provide technical assistance to employers about the school-based and work-based learning components, counseling and case management services; and to train other players, teachers, workplace mentors, school site mentors, and counselors.

- *Assisting schools and employers to integrate school-based and work-based learning, as well as academic and occupational learning* - The state grant announcement contained no elaboration on this point. (One state provided documentation that indicated that employers were advising directly on the revamping of curricula.)

- *Encouraging the active participation of employers in cooperation with local school officials* - The state grant announcement contained no elaboration on this point.

- *Assisting program participants with transition* - The program is expected to assist students, who have completed the school-to-work program, find an appropriate job, continue their education, enter an additional training program, and/or link with other community services that will help students make the transition from school to work.

- *Tracking and analyzing post-school outcomes* - A school-to-work program is expected to track outcomes in terms of socioeconomic status, race, gender, ethnicity, culture, disability, and on the basis of whether the students are limited-English proficient, school dropouts, disadvantaged students, or academically talented.

- *Linking school-to-work programs to employer efforts to upgrade worker skills* - The state grant announcement contained no elaboration on this point. (In the NASDSE

inquiry, states were not asked to address this issue on the assumption that this is more likely to happen when relationships with employers are well developed and formalized.)

State Grants

The law authorizes two types of state grants--planning grants and implementation grants. Two options were offered because Congress recognized that states varied in their immediate capacity to implement statewide school-to-work programs. Planning and implementation grant requirements are similar in that states are required to address statewide systems needed for school-to-work programs, either in a planning or implementation context. Selected requirements to be addressed in an implementation grant application are outlined here (Title II, Subtitle B) to illustrate how Congress conceived such an effort. Grant applications must describe the state's plan to do the following:

- *Reach rural (low population densities) and urban areas* of the state, including the extent to which "areas" funded reflect local labor markets

- *Support and stimulate local school-to-work programs*, ultimately ensuring such programs cover the entire state

- *Collaborate with specific agencies and officials* in the development of a statewide school-to-work system; specifically, governor, SEA, state agency officials responsible for economic development, state agency officials responsible for employment, state agency officials responsible for job training, state agency officials responsible for postsecondary education, state agency officials responsible for vocational education, state agency officials responsible for vocational rehabilitation, other officials including those who administer sections of the Carl Perkins Vocational and Applied Technical Education Act [sec. 111(b)(1)] and members of the Human Investment Council [authorized by Title VII of the Job Training and Partnership Act], and representatives of the private sector

- *Provide evidence of support* from the agencies and officials identified above

- *Involve a diverse group of employers and others* (e.g., employers, locally elected officials, secondary and postsecondary educational institutions, business associations, industrial extension centers, employees, labor unions or organizations, teachers, related services personnel, students, parents, community-based organizations, rehabilitation agencies and organizations, registered apprenticeship agencies, local vocational education agencies, vocational student organizations, State or regional cooperative education associations, and human services agencies)

- *Coordinate funds from diverse programs* (e.g., twelve federally-funded programs--the Adult Education Act, Carl Perkins Vocational and Applied Technical Education Act, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Higher Education Act, part F of the Social Security Act, Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the National Skill Standards Act, the Individuals with Disabilities Act, the Job Training and Partnership Act, the National Apprenticeship Act, the Rehabilitation Act, and the National and Community Service Act)

- *Provide training* for teachers, employers, mentors, counselors, related services personnel, and others, including specialized training and technical support for the counseling and training of women, minorities, and individuals with disabilities for high-skill, high-wage careers in nontraditional employment

- *Assist local partnerships* at the secondary, and where possible, the elementary level, to develop or adopt model curricula and technologies to integrate academic and vocational learning, promote career awareness, consistent with federal educational and occupational skill standards

- *Expand and improve counseling services* at both the elementary and secondary level, which may include linkages to career counseling and labor market information services outside of school systems

- *Integrate academic and vocational education*

- *Use public and private resources* to maintain the statewide school-to-work system when funds under the STWOA are no longer available

- *Ensure that paid, high-quality, work-based learning experiences* will be part of the statewide school-to-work system

- *Provide meaningful experiences for ALL students*, which suggests two possibilities--activities and assignments that replicate real-world conditions, and all students should have opportunities to engage in these activities and assignments (The state grant announcement contained no elaboration on this point.)

- *Ensure opportunities for young women* to participate in school-to-work programs that lead to employment in high performance, high paying jobs, including nontraditional employment; goals should ensure an environment free from racial and sexual harassment

- *Ensure opportunities for low-achieving students, students with disabilities, school dropouts, and academically talented students*

- *Assess the skills and knowledge* required in career majors and the process for awarding skills certificates (consistent, to the extent feasible, with the skills certification systems endorsed in the National Skill Standards Act of 1994).

- *Ensure that students will develop the ability to choose a career and have the opportunity to change career majors* (The state grant application contained no elaboration on this point.)

- *Continue to fund local school-to-work partnerships*, initially funded by the Federal Government, even if the state is not prepared and capable of creating a local partnership. STWOA authorized direct federal funding of local partnerships, and direct Federal grants to local partnerships in high poverty areas. These local, federally funded grants, are to be awarded on a competitive basis, are not available to local partnerships in which a state has an implementation grant under STWOA, and are generally limited to one year.

- *Integrate all local school-to-work programs*, including those funded directly by the federal government (This is discussed in the next section.)

- *Establish and carry out performance standards* for the statewide school-to-work system, including how such standards relate to performance standards under other related programs

- *Designate a fiscal agent* to be accountable for the STWOA funds (The Governor submits the STWOA grant to the Departments of Education and Labor; this agent may or may not be the SEA; the decision is that of the Governor.)

- *Facilitate transition from a school-to-work program* to another training or educational opportunity, which might be viewed as an outcome that would be achieved if states successfully implement all other program requirements

Local Partnerships

The term "local partnership" means a local entity responsible for local school-to-work programs. Such partnerships are to consist of employers, representatives of LEAs and postsecondary institutions (including representatives of area vocational education schools), local educators (e.g., teachers, counselors, or administrators), representatives of labor organizations or non-managerial employee representatives, and students. Such partnerships may include other entities, such as: employer organizations; community-based organizations; national trade associations working at the local level; industrial extension centers; rehabilitation agencies and organizations; registered apprenticeship agencies; local

vocational education entities; proprietary institutions of higher education; local government agencies; parent organizations; teacher organizations; vocational student organizations; and private industry councils, as well as groups representing Native Americans and Native Hawaiians.

The **Local Partnership Compact** specifies that a local partnership cannot receive a subgrant from the state unless it agrees it will establish a process by which the responsibilities and expectations of students, parents, employers, and schools are clearly established and agreed upon at the point of entry of the student into a career major program of study. The STWOA identifies a series of activities in which local partnerships may engage. These are referred to as **Allowable Activities** and are highlighted below.

- *Recruiting and providing assistance to employers* - The purpose of reaching out to employers, small and mid-size, is to help them become sources of work-based learning activities.

- *Establishing a consortia of employers to support the school-to-work program* - In addition to general support of the school-to-work program, it is anticipated that these employers would be sources of jobs related to the career majors of students.

- *Supporting or establishing intermediaries, selected from the partnership, to carry out the connecting activities* - In addition to carrying out connecting activities described earlier in this paper, it is anticipated that these intermediaries would assist students and dropouts in finding jobs and further education and training.

- *Designing or adapting curricula* - The focus of these activities are curricula that integrate academic, vocational, and occupational learning, school-based and work-based learning, and secondary and postsecondary education for all students in the area served.

- *Providing training to staff* - This training is to address new curricula, student assessment, student guidance, and feedback to the school regarding student performance.

- *Establishing a graduation assistance program* - This assistance program is to aid students who are at-risk, low-achieving, and disabled. The objectives of such a program are to help these targeted students graduate from high school, enroll in postsecondary education or training, and finding or advancing in jobs.

- *Providing a range of services for students* - Multiple services for students, to begin no later than seventh grade, are listed under "allowable activities:" career exploration and awareness, counseling and mentoring, college awareness and preparation, as well as other services.

- *Providing supplementary and support services* - Such services may include such services as transportation and child support. Supplementary and support services are described as services necessary for participation in a local school-to-work program.

- *Conducting or obtaining an in-depth analysis of the local labor market analysis* - Such activities may also involve conducting and obtaining generic and specific skill needs of employers associated with high-demand, high-wage careers.

- *Integrating school-based learning and work-based learning into job training programs for school dropouts* - In listing this as an allowable activity, the statute encourages accessing and using programs for dropouts that exist and pre-date STWOA.

- *Establishing or expanding school-to-apprenticeship programs* - Such programs are to operate with the cooperation of registered apprenticeship programs and apprenticeship sponsors.

- *Assisting participating employers to identify and train workplace mentors and to develop work-based learning components* - In the law, again, reference is made to both small and mid-size employers as important members of the employer community.

- *Promoting partnerships among elementary school and secondary schools and local businesses* - This activity is projected as important to our Country's future workplace productivity and competitiveness.

- *Designing local strategies to provide adequate planning and staff development activities* - Teachers, school counselors, related services personnel, and school site mentors are to be the focus of these activities and are to include opportunities for these individuals outside the classroom at the worksite.

- *Enhancing linkages between after-school, weekend, and summer jobs, career exploration, and school-based learning* - The state grant announcement contained no elaboration on this point.

- *Obtaining the assistance of organizations that have a successful history of working with at-risk and disadvantaged youth and school dropouts* - The role of these organizations is to be recruitment of the targeted youth for the local school-to-work program.

Specific References to Students with Disabilities and Special Education

Students with disabilities are referenced directly and indirectly in STWOA. For example, in the Definition Section of the statute the term "all students," which is used throughout the law, is defined to mean "both male and female students from a broad range

of backgrounds and circumstances, including disadvantaged students, students with diverse racial, cultural, or ethnic backgrounds, American Indians, Alaska Natives, Native Hawaiians, students with disabilities, students with limited-English proficiency, migrant children, school dropouts, and academically talented students (sec. 1(2))." Occasionally, the term "students with disabilities" is used along with specific references to other subpopulations of students for emphasis. For example in the State Plan, the state must describe how it will ensure opportunities for students with disabilities among others (State Plan requirements, sec. 213(d)(15)).

With regard to IDEA, it is identified as one of the federally funded programs with which a statewide school-to-work system must be coordinated (State Plan requirements, sec. 213(d)(6)(H)), but is not listed as one of the sections of a statute that can be waived as part of the effort to establish a statewide school-to-work system (sec. 502).

The STWOA does not provide set asides or entitlement for any population of students. In the General Program Requirements, section 101(5) of the Act, the law specifies that a School-to-Work Opportunities Program under the Act shall: "provide all students with equal access to the full range of such program components (including school-based and work-based learning components) and related activities, such as recruitment, enrollment, and placement activities, except that nothing in this Act shall be construed to provide any individual with an entitlement to services under this Act."

CHALLENGES TO EDUCATIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE IMPOSED BY THE STWOA

Transition and Coordination

When students reach junior high school, coordination demands increase substantially. A minimum of five to seven separate instructional blocks must be coordinated daily for each student. This coordination demand continues throughout high school. School-to-work requirements impose a higher degree of instructional coordination than is evident in current high school department-based efforts and in instruction tied to academic graduation requirements. With school-to-work efforts come the demand for coordination among entities and players outside of school. Whereas this latter type of coordination may be new to school personnel not involved in traditional vocational programs, the process is not new to educators and others involved in designing and providing some transitional services for students with disabilities. The challenge is to use this coordination experience to alter and expand school-to-work opportunities for all students, including those with disabilities. By sharing special education coordination experience and skill with regular educators, special educators will be able impact school to work opportunities for all students.

State agencies that have the resources and capacity to provide local communities with technical assistance and training related to coordination will have an advantage. Early investment in how to approach coordination should produce a workable school-to-work infrastructure. Players outside the school system may force consideration of new strategies for achieving functional coordination among all members of a local partnership.

Under the STWOA, the governor not the state school superintendent has control over how the state grant will be written and implemented. Similarly, it does not designate educators as the lead staff for school-to-work efforts. Any configuration of designated players, including education agencies, may design and run a local partnership. In some communities, members of the Private Industry Council (PIC) authorized by the Job Training Partnership Act may assume leadership in implementing a local partnership. PICs include many local employers and is an important component of and resource to any STWOA partnership. Those special educators with knowledge of and involvement with PICs and JTPA programs will have an advantage over those that do not. At the state level if there are good channels of communication between the State Department of Labor and the SEA, governors will have a basis for joint planning and coordination of implementation efforts.

Achieving effective levels and forms of coordination with regular educators and non-education members of a local partnership are not the only challenges special educators will face in school-to-work initiatives. Relationships between state vocational rehabilitation personnel and special educators are another actual or potential resource. The STWOA and expected new federal legislation consolidate federal employment and training programs, including possibly vocational rehabilitation, will trigger uncertainty and concern among some rehabilitation agencies. In states and communities where rehabilitation personnel have established working relationships with special educators, the uncertainty and concern will be less and a basis for expanded efforts to coordinate may be easier to promote. The expertise, experience, and contacts of vocational rehabilitation counselors would obviously benefit students with disabilities served through a local partnership. This same expertise, experience, and contacts might benefit at risk students, either directly or indirectly. The challenge for special educators will be to identify and suggest new forms of collaboration among groups and individuals, who until now served only students with disabilities in isolation or in a limited manner.

Consideration of Students with Disabilities in the STWOA Planning Phase

STWOA has created a new ball game for everybody. How local partnerships will function and what influence states will have on that functioning is evolving. If special educators, from SEAs, LEAs, colleges and universities, nonprofit organizations and interest groups, are at the STWOA planning table, then students with disabilities are more likely to have access to the full range of STWOA opportunities as they become available. If special educators are not at the planning table, then it is more likely that access to these

opportunities may be restricted, intentionally or unintentionally, by the adoption of strategies that have been questioned in the past (e.g., set asides, quotas, exclusionary eligibility criteria, separate opportunities). If those interested in expanding opportunities for students with disabilities wait until STWOA are proposed and implemented to react to their design, their only recourse to ensuring access to STWOA programs for such students may be suits brought under the Americans with Disabilities Act. This is certainly a costly and time consuming alternative to being involved in front-end planning of STWOA programs.

The effects of standards

Everyone recognizes the importance of world class (national) educational and occupational skills standards. STWOA programs are expected to know and use to establish what students know and can do within specific career paths and careers. Unfortunately, such standards are not yet available, and states are under pressure to develop interim alternatives. Special educators should be involved in developing and identifying these interim standards. Special educators advocate for standards that are expressed clearly, in relevant terms, and broadly. Special educators should advocate for assessment of standards process that incorporates tolerance for flexibility in the modes through which a student demonstrates competency. Such flexibility would increase the likelihood that students with disabilities will be treated fairly during the administration of tests and the interpretation of test results. Such flexibility in the assessment process will most likely benefit other students as well. Special educators are in a position to educate others about how to determine with validity what a student knows and can do in a variety of settings and circumstances. This knowledge must be used in designing and implementing STWOA programs. If it is not, then systematic exclusion of students with disabilities from participation in these programs may result.

Financing

There has been a collective reluctance among professionals and advocates concerned about students with disabilities to endorse commingling of special education funds with other funds. If this reluctance continues, it will be more difficult to promote and achieve maximum levels of participation for students with disabilities in STWOA programs. Moreover, using the legal leverage of the ADA to ensure access while at the same time demanding the maintenance of a separate funding stream for all education services for students with disabilities may be counter productive in terms of expanding opportunities for students with disabilities of junior and high school age. A willingness to put some money on the table during the planning process will most likely enhance the ability of special educators to influence the design and implementation of STWOA programs and the extent to which they offer access to students with disabilities.

THE NASDSE INQUIRY

Purpose of the Analysis

On July 18, 1994, $43 million was awarded to eight states to implement the STWOA statewide systems. The state grantees were: Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Oregon and Wisconsin. The range of grant awards was $2 million to $10 million. The amount of each state award is presented in Table 1.

Table 1
July 1994 STWOA Awards

State	Amount of Award (Millions of Dollars)
Kentucky	4
Maine	2
Massachusetts	4.5
Michigan	8
New Jersey	6
New York	10
Oregon	3
Wisconsin	4.5

The NASDSE Inquiry was designed the summer of 1994 to examine how the states implemented these awards in the early months, particularly in regard to the involvement of special educators in planning and attention to the needs of students with disabilities.

Method

Nine states, eight of which have STWOA Implementation Grants, plus Illinois which had not been awarded a STWOA Implementation Grant at the time of this study, were asked to complete the 18-factor inquiry form. The 18 factors reflected the 18 major requirements specified for inclusion in the STWOA State Implementation Grants. Four basic questions were asked regarding each factor. They are as follows:

- Was a factor (activity) addressed in a state's STWOA effort?
- Did the effort involve special education personnel?
- Were the needs of students with disabilities specifically addressed in the effort?
- What examples or documentation are available?

Forms were completed and returned by the nine States, along with, in most cases, supporting documentation. One state's data were incomplete and therefore were not included in the analysis. The eight states represented in the analysis are Illinois, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, Oregon and Wisconsin. The inquiry form can be found in Appendix A.

Inquiry forms from the eight states were summarized on one data table to facilitate analysis (Table 2). Charts containing data from states on the four individual questions/categories are contained in Appendix B.

The Findings

The results indicate that most responding states have undertaken the 18 key activities (specified as "factors") required or recommended in the STWOA State plans. Specifically, as illustrated in Table 2, all eight states addressed eleven of the eighteen factors. Fifteen factors were addressed by six or more states.

While all eight states addressed the development of a marketing plan [#5], only two states reported that they had included special education personnel in this activity or considered the needs of students with disabilities. A similar situation is reflected in regard to promotion of business involvement [#6], where eight states addressed the factor, but only two involved special education personnel in the activity and only two considered the needs of students with disabilities.

States were asked to characterize the involvement of special education personnel in STWOA implementation activities. Special education staff involvement occurred most frequently (6 states) in the areas of developing statewide plans [#2], creating local partnerships [#4] and support for local planning and development activities [#8]. Involvement of special education personnel was reported least frequently (1 or 2 states) in developing marketing plans [#5], promoting business development [#6], developing a process for issuing skill certificates [#12], developing a labor market analysis system [#14], tracking and analyzing post-high school employment experiences of high school dropouts

[#15], developing retention practices [#16], and coordinating recruitment strategies for out-of school, at risk, and disadvantaged students [#17].

Responses from states varied when asked whether or not the needs of students with disabilities were specifically addressed in STWOA programs. Six-seven states reported specific consideration of students with disabilities in planning a structure for administering the school to work program [#1], creation of local partnerships [#3], support for local planning and development activities [#8], and the identification of strategies for providing technical assistance [#9]. Only one of the eight States reported that such needs were considered on the development of skill certificates [#12]. If a state had involved special education personnel in the 18 factor areas, it was also likely to address the needs of students with disabilities in those factor areas.

The capacity of the states to provide examples on specific factors was mixed and limited [Table 2, data column 4]. Six States provided examples of support for local programs [#8]. Four or more States provided examples of the structure for administering STWOA programs [#1], a State plan [#2], existing school to work programs [#3], local partnerships [#4], methods of coordinating local programs with State efforts [#7] support for local planning and development activities [#8], strategies for providing technical assistance [#9], pilot programs [#11], the design of challenging curricula [#13]. On the remainder of the factors three or fewer States provided examples.

Although a very limited sample, two points standout. First, special education personnel are less often involved in activities not associated directly with education, (e.g., promotion of business involvement, development of a labor market analysis system and the tracking and analysis of post-high school employment experiences of high school dropouts) but are involved in activities that have direct service ramifications. Second, if special education personnel are involved in a particular activity, then needs of students with disabilities are more likely to receive specific attention. For specific comparisons across States on each category of inquiry see Appendix B. Short State profiles are presented in the section following Table 2.

TABLE 2
Summary Of States' Responses

School-to-Work Inquiry				
How would you characterize the status of state efforts with regard to a school-to-work program for high school students in terms of the following factors	Of a total of 8 States, number of States answering yes			
	Part of Plan or implementation effort	Included special education personnel involvement	Needs of students with disabilities addressed	Examples and document's available
1. A structure for administering the school-to -work program	8	5	6	4
2. A statewide plan for school-to-work plan	8	6	5	4
3. Identification of existing school-to-work programs	7	5	5	5
4. Creation of local partnership (e.g., schools and businesses, organization, or other public entities)	8	6	7	5
5. Development of a marketing plan	8	2	2	2
6. Promotion of business involvement	8	2	2	3
7. Identification of methods of coordinating local school-to-work program with state program	8	4	5	5
8. Support for local planning and development activities related to school-to-work initiatives	8	6	6	6
9. Identification of strategies for providing technical assistance	8	5	6	5
10. Development of training and technical assistance for members of partnerships	7	4	5	3
11. Development of pilot programs	7	5	3	4
12. Development of a process for issuing skill certificates	8	2	1	1
13. Design of challenging curricula	8	4	4	4
14. Development of labor market analysis system	8	1	2	3
15. Tracking and analysis of post-high school employment experiences of high school dropouts	5	1	2	2
16. Development with local school systems of school retention practices	7	2	3	2
17. Coordination of recruitment strategies for out-of-school, at risk, and disadvantaged students	5	2	3	2
18.Special targeted technical assistance for rural partnerships	5	3	2	3

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State Profiles

Illinois

Illinois reported addressing 16 of the 18 factors as part of its plan or implementation efforts. The two gaps were in developing training and technical assistance programs and in developing pilot programs. Illinois reported specifically involving special education personnel in developing the statewide plan identifying existing school to work progress, identifying technical assistance strategies, and designing challenging curricula. It considered the needs of students with disabilities when addressing 15 of the 18 factors. With the exception of the failure to specifically address the needs of students with disabilities when developing a process for issuing skill certificates, the other two omissions were not connected directly to student services.

Illinois provided guidelines for local applications and a booklet that offered an overview of its school-to-work initiative. Data are reported for all vocational education students regarding academic achievement, occupational confidence, further education and employment. This information is disaggregated by type of special population. All state agencies are working together to develop a system which will standardize information on all clients.

Kentucky

Kentucky reported addressing all 18 factors in its implementation efforts. involving special education personnel in all factors connected with implementation of its STWOA program, and addressing the needs of students with disabilities in connection to all 18 factors. Kentucky submitted its STWOA plan. The plan builds on established linkages within the State. In addition, it requires all STWOA players to develop contracts spelling out resource commitments, roles, and responsibilities. Students with disabilities are offered access to programs along with their peers.

Massachusetts

Massachusetts reported addressing all 18 factors in its implementation efforts; however, no specific special education personnel were involved. It reported directly considering the needs of students with disabilities in connection to six factors: design of administrative structure, creation of local partnerships, identification of coordination strategies, support for local planning and development activities, identification of technical assistance strategies, and developing training and technical assistance programs.

Massachusetts submitted a copy of its STWOA grant. It includes many approaches that should benefit students with disabilities; including individualized assessments, case managers, and assurances related to access and equity.

Maine

Maine has addressed 16 of the 18 factors in its state plan or implementation efforts. Its two gaps are the tracking and analysis of post high school employment experiences of high school drop outs and the coordination of recruitment strategies for out-of-school, at risk, and disadvantaged students. Maine reported the specific involvement of special education personnel in 11 of 18 factors, most of which have direct service implications. Maine's response with regard to students with disabilities tracks that of Massachusetts, with three differences. Maine reported considering such students in the development of a statewide plan for school-to-work initiatives, whereas Massachusetts did not; Maine did not report specifically considering the needs of students with disabilities when identifying coordination strategies, whereas Massachusetts did; and Maine reported specifically addressing the needs of students with disabilities in the design of challenging curricula and Massachusetts did not.

Maine provided extensive documentation related to its special education transition systems change project and selected material from its school-to-work State grant. Its STWOA calls for an individualized opportunity plan for each individual participating in the State's initiative. It appears to be an inclusive approach though specific references to students with disabilities are minimal.

Michigan

Michigan reported addressing all 18 factors in its state plan or implementation efforts. Special education personnel were involved in the same seven factor areas where the needs of students with disabilities were specifically addressed. The mutual areas are the design of administrative structure, development of a statewide plan, identification of existing school-to-work programs, creation of local partnerships, identification of coordination strategies, support for local planning and development activities, and coordination of recruitment strategies for out-of-school, at risk, and disadvantaged students.

Michigan provided three documents: a copy of its State grant, an example of a local transition grant, and a list of the members of its State steering committee. Available references to students with disabilities were expressed as an intent to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

New Jersey

New Jersey reported that it had addressed 17 of the 18 factors. It has yet to target technical assistance for rural partnerships. It reported special education personnel involvement in ten factors associated with planning, coordination, and developing strategies for providing technical assistance. New Jersey responding in the affirmative on 8 factors with regard to consideration of students with disabilities. New Jersey, along with Kentucky and Oregon, were the three States to report special consideration of students with disabilities in the development of pilot programs.

New Jersey provided a copy of its STWOA grant. Treatment of students with disabilities in the grant are addressed in a civil rights context (i.e., as assurances of access and equity).

Oregon

Oregon has addressed 15 of the 18 factors. Its gaps follow a pattern similar to other participating states. Oregon has yet to develop a tracking system, a coordinated recruitment effort for out-of-school, at risk, and disadvantaged students, or to target technical assistance for rural partnerships. Oregon reported special educators as being involved in 12 of the 18 activities/factors addressed in the NASDSE inquiry. Involvement was reported in a wide range of activities. In addition to those factors concerned with direct service, special education personnel were involved with other factors including the promotion of business involvement and the creation of local partnerships. On 7 of the 18 factors Oregon specifically considered the needs of students with disabilities. As noted in the section on New Jersey, Oregon was one of those states that took into account the needs of students with disabilities in developing pilot programs. Likewise, Oregon paired with Illinois and Kentucky as the only states that specifically considered students with disabilities in the development with local school systems of school retention practices.

Oregon provided highlights from its STWOA grant; planning is in process. All efforts are to take into account the needs of "all students."

Wisconsin

Wisconsin reported that it had addressed 13 of the 18 factors in its plan or implementation efforts. It had not yet identified local programs that meet school-to-work requirements, developed a system to track and analyze post high school employment experiences of high school dropouts, developed retention strategies with local school systems, coordinated recruitment strategies for out of school, at risk, and disadvantaged

students, nor specifically targeted technical assistance for rural partnerships. Wisconsin reported special education personnel involvement in three activities: creating local partnerships, providing support for local planning and development, and developing pilot programs. Wisconsin indicated that it specifically considered the needs of students with disabilities on one factor--creation of local partnerships.

Wisconsin provided extensive documentation that indicates that the state is in a position to build on an aggressive, ongoing commitment to prepare its young people for work. Wisconsin has invested heavily in education goals and performance indicators that appear to apply to all students. Moreover, its definition of "at-risk" youth encompasses some students who are disabled. School districts are required to develop district-wide plans for this at-risk population.

Summary

In a review of the written documentation provided, there is mixed news -- some potentially bad, some good. Of the eight states providing information, only three referenced state transition projects for students with disabilities as linked to or resources for STWOA initiatives. Even these transition efforts appear to reflect a "project" orientation rather than a "system-based" approach. Further, most references to students with disabilities were couched in term of access or equity (e.g., students with disabilities "to be included" or "will have access to what is offered, with reasonable accommodation provided."). Only one responding State specifically espoused a zero-reject model in its approach to reaching and serving students through STWOA programs. Most states were ambiguous about how many students they would serve by a certain date. Although a couple of states were specific about the roles of multiple-person entities (e.g., councils and boards) and identified specific forms of mandated representation (e.g., individuals representing the interest of students with disabilities, minorities), details of specific repesentation and expectations of special interest groups are not available.

Analysis of the inquiry data clearly indicates a relation between the involvement of special education personnel in school to work planning and implementation activities and the consideration of the students with disabilities across factors. Given the relative newness of the STWOA initiative and the affect it will have on numerous areas in education including personnel development, curriculum design, and student evaluation, special educators and other individuals concerned about education, training, and employment opportunities for students with disabilities must be involved in a thoughtful proactive manner as STWOA efforts are planned and implemented. Maintaining the status quo will not yield desired results.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The needs and interests of state and local special educators may vary in some cases, but nonetheless, both must sort out three sets of facts: (1) the status of STWOA planning or implementation, (2) what they can immediately offer to the effort, and (3) what new roles they must assume to be a long term player and change agent; including what they must learn, take on, promote or oppose with regard to students with disabilities in the STWOA initiative.

Decisions about what to do and how to evaluate information should be guided by four basic principles:

1. Students with disabilities should not be prevented, by physical barriers or discriminatory policies and procedures, from accessing what is being offered to other students.

2. Qualified students with disabilities should be given the supports and accommodations needed in order to participate in what is being offered.

3. If participation is denied on the basis of disability, a student should have access to due process.

4. Responsible officials should be able to track and report (a) funding provided for supports, accommodations, or alternative programs for students with disabilities and (b) the number of students with disabilities served in school-to-work programs.

Although there are legal and administrative mechanisms in place that are consistent with these principles (e.g., State laws, Part B of IDEA, section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the ADA), special educators may be called upon to suggest more simplified and flexible alternatives to current mechanisms. If the four principles listed here are used as the framework for planning bodies, then students with disabilities should benefit from new opportunities that emerge as a result of the STWOA.

Listed below are some basic recommendations that should enable special educators to decisively join and affect STWOA-driven efforts.

1. ***Do a quick assessment of the status of STWOA implementation***

Although several States have received implementation grants they, as well as local partnerships directly funded by the federal government, are still "planning," refining, and "debugging" their approach to school-to-work programs. A status assessment would involve

the following:

- Determine who is in charge
- Determine how, where, and what decisions are being made, especially with regard to resource allocations
- Determine what agencies, organizations, groups, and other entities are involved with planning or implementation
- Determine if you know or work with any of the players above
- Identify where STWOA programs are currently in operation
- Determine if students with disabilities, including how many, are being served in these programs
- Determine what types of disabilities are represented
- Determine what types of career options are involved

Collecting such information will tell special educators what the actual status of STWOA implementation efforts are; where the areas of opportunity are; and where the limitations or barriers are.

2. ***Identify what you or your agency can contribute***

No matter how organized, how much past experience, or how much preplanning has occurred, few STWOA initiatives have taken a detailed look at how students with disabilities and their unique needs can be incorporated fully and fairly into STWOA initiatives. Moreover, STWOA implementers may encounter challenges that they have not anticipated or in which they have had limited experience. Herein lies opportunities for special educators to:

- Share career awareness materials related to jobs found in the community or State. These materials may have been adapted across grade levels or ability levels, and if so, share with others
- Share State or community-based contacts that could or should be a resource or partner in a STWOA effort

- Share with others experience with making academic content connected to career paths
- Make suggestions about how to improve team functioning or coordination across multiple players
- Share knowledge about the development and use of criterion referenced testing
- Share knowledge about how to develop or identify valid modifications to traditional testing or valid alternatives to traditional testing, which may be necessary in measuring a student's competence
- Demonstrate how to individualize instruction
- Show others how to individualize assessments and interpret assessment results
- Demonstrate how to successfully coordinate in and out-of-school opportunities with students -- actually do it or set policies for it
- Share experience and proven strategies for motivating stakeholders to invest in what is bring developed or proposed
- Identify other resources or expertise that you can offer to STWOA efforts (i.e., knowledge of assistive technology, effective inservice training)

3. ***Embrace new challenges and roles***

It is most urgent that special educators embrace the challenges and accept new roles brought about by STWOA. A preliminary list of suggestions that will help special educators define and choose their role in evolving STWOA initiatives is outlined below.

- Learn about the jobs and business people in our community and State
- Learn about the JTPA programs and PIC representatives in the community and state, as well as about Tech-Prep, apprenticeship and JOBS programs
- Develop or strengthen postsecondary contacts in your community and State
- Develop or strengthen working relationships with vocational education personnel
- Develop or strengthen working relationships with school counselors

- Develop or strengthen working relationships with vocational rehabilitation personnel, Projects with Industry, and Centers for Independent Living in your community and State, as well as with private community-based vocational rehabilitation providers in the community and State

- Strengthen your familiarity with assistive technology -- where to get it, how to use it, what it costs

- Learn about public, accessible transportation in the community and State

- Learn the general education approached to career awareness

- Develop or strengthen your expertise with regard to job development and placement

- Involve employers and labor union representatives with your students in school-based learning and work-based learning programs

- Know state adopted/recommended curricula

- Know State approach/position on educational standards and how they are measured

- Develop or strengthen knowledge of the unique demands students from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds pose for STWOA programs

Until special educators are in a position to take these basic action steps, they are at risk of being marginalized and being unable to influence, to the extent they should or could, the range of opportunities made available to students with disabilities in any STWOA system or program. The information NASDSE received from nine States is not sufficient to generalize to all States, nor clear enough to speculate if special educators are being marginalized with regard to STWOA initiatives. Nonetheless, the information suggests that if special educators are involved in planning STWOA programs, more attention is paid to students with disabilities. Such an inference does not guarantee quality school-to-work opportunities for students with disabilities, but it is a modest step in the right direction.

APPENDIX A

School-To-Work Inquiry Form

Project Forum at NASDSE

School-to-Work

Lines of Inquiry

Respondent Information

Name: **Title:**

Content and Instructions

Status of State School-to-Work Efforts

The intent of the questionnaire is to ascertain the progress States have made in regard to planning and implementing their school-to-work programs. For each of the 18 items please do the following: place an "X" in column 2 if the activity is part of the state plan or being implemented; place a "P" in column 3 if special education personnel are involved in plan development and implementation activities and/or "D" if the needs of students with disabilities were specifically addressed in designing or implementing the approach to an activity; and place an "E" in column 4 if documentation or examples of an activity are available. A space is provided at the end of the questionnaire for your to specify the examples identified in column 4.

1. How would you characterize the status of state efforts with regard to a school-to-work program for high school students in term of the following factors –	2. Part of plan or implementation effort [X]	3. Included involvement of special education personnel [P]/ specifically addressed needs of students w/disabilities [D]	4. Documentation or examples are available [E, list on reverse side]
A structure for administering the school-to-work program			
Statewide plan for school-to-work plan			
Identification of existing school-to-work programs in the state			
Creation of partnerships (e.g., schools and businesses, unions, organizations, or other public entities)			
Development of a marketing plan			
Promotion of business involvement			
Identification of methods of coordinating local school-to-work programs with the state program			
Support for local planning and development activities related to school-to-work initiatives			
Identification of strategies for providing technical assistance			
Development of training and technical assistance for members of partnerships			
Development of pilot programs			
Development of a process for issuing skill certificates			
Design of challenging curricula			
Development of a labor market analysis system			
Tracking and analysis of post-high school employment experiences of high school dropouts			
Development with local school systems of school retention practices			
Coordination of recruitment strategies for out-of-school, at risk, and disadvantaged students			
Special targeted technical assistance for rural partnerships			

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List here the examples, illustrations, or other support documentation that are included with the mailing/transmission of this inquiry or are being sent under separate cover.

Item #	Description	Enclosed	Sent separately
___	_____	___	_____
___	_____	___	_____
___	_____	___	_____
___	_____	___	_____
___	_____	___	_____
___	_____	___	_____
___	_____	___	_____
___	_____	___	_____
___	_____	___	_____
___	_____	___	_____
___	_____	___	_____
___	_____	___	_____

Name State or local contacts that might be able to assist with getting additional positive examples of the issues addressed in the inquiry.

APPENDIX B

Results Of School-To-Work Inquiry By Category And State

Chart 1: Implementation Effort by State
Chart 2: Special Education Staff Involvement by State
Chart 3: Special Attention to Needs of Students with Disabilities by State
Chart 4: Examples or Documentation Available by State

Chart 1
Implementation Effort By State

School-to-Work Inquiry								
How would you characterize the status of state efforts with regard to a school-to-work program for high school students in terms of the following factors	**State Responses** Part of an implementation effort: yes (X)							
	IL	KY	MA	ME	MI	NJ	OR	WI
1. A structure for administering the school-to-work program	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
2. A statewide plan for school-to-work plan	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
3. Identification of existing school-to-work programs	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
4. Creation of local partnership (e.g., schools and businesses, organization, or other public entities)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
5. Development of a marketing plan	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
6. Promotion of business involvement	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
7. Identification of methods of coordinating local school-to-work program with state program	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
8. Support for local planning and development activities related to school-to-work initiatives	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
9. Identification of strategies for providing technical assistance	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
10. Development of training and technical assistance for members of partnerships		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
11. Development of pilot programs		X	X	X	X	X	X	X
12. Development of a process for issuing skill certificates	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
13. Design of challenging curricula	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
14. Development of labor market analysis system	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
15. Tracking and analysis of post-high school employment experiences of high school dropouts	X	X	X		X	X		
16. Development with local school systems of school retention practices	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
17. Coordination of recruitment strategies for out-of-school, at risk, and disadvantaged students	X	X	X		X	X		
18. Special targeted technical assistance for rural partnerships	X	X	X	X	X			

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Chart 2
Special Education Staff Involvement By State

School-to-Work Inquiry								
How would you characterize the status of state efforts with regard to a school-to-work program for high school students in terms of the following factors	State Responses Special education personnel involved in the effort: yes (X)							
	IL	KY	MA	ME	MI	NJ	OR	WI
1.A structure for administering the school-to-work program		X		X	X	X	X	
2. A statewide plan for school-to-work plan	X	X		X	X	X	X	
3. Identification of existing school-to-work programs	X	X			X	X	X	
4. Creation of local partnership (e.g., schools and businesses, organization, or other public entities)		X		X	X	X	X	X
5. Development of a marketing plan		X				X		
6. Promotion of business involvement		X					X	
7. Identification of methods of coordinating local school-to-work program with state program.		X			X	X	X	
8. Support for local planning and development activities related to school-to-work initiatives		X		X	X	X	X	X
9. Identification of strategies for providing technical assistance	X	X		X		X	X	
10. Development of training and technical assistance for members of partnerships		X		X		X	X	
11. Development of pilot programs		X		X		X	X	X
12. Development of a process for issuing skill certificates		X		X				
13. Design of challenging curricula	X	X		X			X	
14. Development of labor market analysis system		X						
15. Tracking and analysis of post-high school employment experiences of high school dropouts		X						
16. Development with local school systems of school retention practices		X		X				
17. Coordination of recruitment strategies for out-of-school, at risk, and disadvantaged students		X			X			
18. Special targeted technical assistance for rural partnerships		X		X			X	

Chart 3
Special Attention To Needs Of Students With Disabilities By State

School-to-Work Inquiry								
How would you characterize the status of state efforts with regard to a school-to-work program for high school students in terms of the following factors	**State Responses Needs of students with disabilities specifically addressed in the effort: yes (X)**							
	IL	KY	MA	ME	MI	NJ	OR	WI
1. A structure for administering the school-to-work program	X	X	X	X	X	X		
2. A statewide plan for school-to-work plan	X	X		X	X	X		
3. Identification of existing school-to-work programs	X	X			X	X	X	
4. Creation of local partnership (e.g., schools and businesses, organization, or other public entities)	X	X	X	X	X	X		X
5. Development of a marketing plan	X	X						
6. Promotion of business involvement	X	X						
7. Identification of methods of coordinating local school-to-work program with state program	X	X	X		X	X		
8. Support for local planning and development activities related to school-to-work initiatives	X	X	X	X	X		X	
9. Identification of strategies for providing technical assistance	X	X	X	X		X	X	
10. Development of training and technical assistance for members of partnerships		X	X	X		X	X	
11. Development of pilot programs		X				X	X	
12. Development of a process for issuing skill certificates		X						
13. Design of challenging curricula	X	X		X			X	
14. Development of labor market analysis system	X	X						
15. Tracking and analysis of post-high school employment experiences of high school dropouts	X	X						
16. Development with local school systems of school retention practices	X	X					X	
17. Coordination of recruitment strategies for out-of-school, at risk, and disadvantaged students	X	X			X			
18. Special targeted technical assistance for rural partnerships	X	X						

Chart 4
Examples Or Documentation Available By State

School-to-Work Inquiry								
How would you characterize the status of state efforts with regard to a school-to-work program for high school students in terms of the following factors	State Responses Documentation provided: yes (X)							
	IL	KY	MA	ME	MI	NJ	OR	WI
1. A structure for administering the school-to-work program	X	X					X	X
2. A statewide plan for school-to-work plan	X	X				X		X
3. Identification of existing school-to-work programs	X	X			X	X	X	
4. Creation of local partnership (e.g., schools and businesses, organization, or other public entities)		X		X	X		X	X
5. Development of a marketing plan		X						X
6. Promotion of business involvement		X					X	X
7. Identification of methods of coordinating local school-to-work program with state program	X	X			X		X	X
8. Support for local planning and development activities related to school-to-work initiatives	X	X		X	X		X	X
9. Identification of strategies for providing technical assistance	X	X		X			X	X
10. Development of training and technical assistance for members of partnerships		X					X	X
11. Development of pilot programs		X		X			X	X
12. Development of a process for issuing skill certificates		X						
13. Design of challenging curricula	X	X					X	X
14. Development of labor market analysis system	X	X						X
15. Tracking and analysis of post-high school employment experiences of high school dropouts	X	X						
16. Development with local school systems of school retention practices	X	X						
17. Coordination of recruitment strategies for out-of-school, at risk, and disadvantaged students	X	X						
18. Special targeted technical assistance for rural partnerships	X	X					X	